

Proposed branch restructure Operations - Child Protection Questions and Answers for staff

About the consultation process

What is the consultation process?

The consultation process is a requirement under the VPS Agreement, in which the department consults with affected staff and relevant union on any proposed, significant changes before these are implemented. It is an opportunity for all parties to achieve better results through collaboration.

There are formal steps and indicative timelines in the consultation process. The objective is for the department to present a change proposal to staff and union within indicative timeframes, and to consider any alternative proposals and feedback provided.

How will the consultation process be managed?

The consultation process will be managed through the Engage DHHS platform. All submissions, including questions, comments and alternative proposals, will be managed through this process. Staff names and any identifying details **are not** published at any time on the platform. Staff should check this site regularly for updates, which are usually made twice per week. Staff will also be advised by their line management of any updates.

What are the timelines for consultation?

The Clause 10 process officially begins immediately following the announcement of the proposed changes to staff, CPSU.

The indicative timeframes for consultation are as follows:

From 21 September 2017

Consultation period starts for Child Protection. During this time, in accordance with the relevant award agreements:

- affected staff are invited to respond to the change proposals;
- regular meetings will be held with the CPSU/HACSU (as required); and
- the department will consider and respond to any responses and alternative proposals

Late November/early mid-December

Anticipated end of consultation process
Final structures are announced

What does the consultation process involve?

Staff and the relevant union can consider the proposed changes and submit questions, provide feedback and/or alternative proposals via the Engage DHHS platform <https://engagedhhs.vic.gov.au/>.

Answers to questions will be published on the relevant Engage DHHS consultation space – check the site regularly for updates. Your line management will also advise you of any new published documents. If your question is about your individual circumstances, it will **not** be published and will be responded to directly (provided you supply a valid email address).

After any feedback and/or alternative proposals are received and worked through by branch directors and deputy

secretaries. A summary of feedback received and responses to individual proposals will be developed and provided to staff.

The structure will be announced shortly after that, followed by a transition process to move to the new structure.

Can the matters I raise through Engage DHHS remain anonymous?

Yes. Engage DHHS will only use the information you provide in order to respond to your specific question or comment. The site requests a name and email in order for the department to respond to a specific question, however, you are able to provide a pseudonym or an alternative (non-DHHS) email address.

Note that you will need to identify yourself if you are submitting an alternative proposal as the department is only required to consider alternative proposals provided by the relevant union or DHHS staff within the scope of the change proposal. We need a valid name and/or email address to confirm that a change proposal is submitted from someone within an affected team.

Will I be able to provide feedback on the proposed structure?

Yes, you can provide feedback either directly to the department via the Engage DHHS platform or through their union during the consultation process.

Has the Community & Public Sector Union been consulted?

Yes, the CPSU has been formally notified in writing about the proposed changes, and has been provided the full set of materials describing the proposal.

How can staff with a disability access documents in accessible formats, including organisational charts?

We have added to all consultation spaces the line 'If you require an accessible version of the organisational charts or any other document please email OrgRedesignConsultation@dhhs.vic.gov.au'. Where a request has been made, we have actioned this and uploaded the accessible documents to the relevant branch consultation space.

How can I determine where staff are proposed to move, particularly those who are on secondment or higher duties?

Please refer to the Business Rules for assigning employees to a new organisational structure (available on the Engage DHHS consultation space). Once consultation is complete and the structure is finalised, all affected employees will be notified whether they have been matched, are best fit or invited to participate in an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. The terms of your current temporary assignment will be honoured and if the new structure comes into effect prior to your date of return, you will not be expected to commence in your role in the new structure until your assignment is complete. We would encourage you to speak to your substantive manager if you require further information.

How will staff on leave or secondment know about the changes and consultation process?

Managers of staff on leave or secondment outside the department are communicating with their staff about the changes, either by email, phone or letter. If the substantive role of a staff member on leave or secondment is significantly affected by the change proposal, then the manager will contact the staff member for a discussion and follow up with an email (which includes details on how to access the consultation spaces on the Engage DHHS platform).

Please refer to the *Fact sheet for assigning employees to a new organisational structure* (available on the Engage DHHS consultation space). Once consultation is complete and the structure is finalised, all affected employees will be notified whether they have been matched, best fit or invited to participate in an Expression of Interest process. The terms of your current temporary assignment will be honoured and if the new structure comes into effect prior to your date of return, you will not be expected to commence in your role in the new structure until your assignment is complete.

Who should contribute to the consultation process?

Under the VPS Agreement, staff whose role or team is affected by the proposed changes are consulted under the terms of the VPS Agreement. The consultation process prescribed in the VPS Agreement includes giving staff the opportunity to ask a question, comment on the proposal or submit an alternative proposal.

Can staff affected in one division/area contribute to the consultation process for another division/area, if the change cuts across both?

Yes, for example if you're in a team that's proposed to move to another unit or team, you may wish to contribute to both unit/team change proposals.

Will all feedback be incorporated and reflected in the new structure?

All feedback will be assessed, considered, and taken on board where practicable. A summary will be provided to staff, outlining the feedback received, which suggestions are reflected in the new structure, and why each suggestion was or wasn't able to be incorporated.

When do we find out the final structure?

After all the feedback is received (including alternative proposals) and worked through, a summary of feedback received and responses to individual proposals will be developed and provided to staff. The structure will be announced shortly after that, followed by the transition process to move to the new structure.

Why are position descriptions being developed as part of the consultation process?

Position Descriptions have been provided to assist employees to understand the roles that are proposed to have significant changes or are new. Position Descriptions will be finalised and aligned to the final structure and the department's processes.

Should all position descriptions have the classification value range included?

The grading component of the Position Description should only refer to the grade and not the value range.

Why do some different positions descriptions have the same accountabilities (1 and 2)?

Accountabilities 1 and 2 are standard accountabilities across departmental position descriptions at this level. They reinforce the important point that employees of the department should maintain an understanding of how their work and that of their teams contributes to improved client and community outcomes. The difference in intent of each role is best reflected in the 'purpose' and 'role of the unit' sections of each position description.

What does it mean for me?

Will there be any job losses as a result of the restructure?

We have made a commitment as part of the review that there will be no overall reduction in jobs.

Will my substantive classification level change?

No. Although there may be changes to existing roles and classifications, the department has made a commitment that there will be no down-grading to an individual staff member's substantive classification in the final structure implemented as a result of consultation. Where there are changes to an individual's role at level, we are committed to ensuring staff have the necessary skills so they can undertake any new roles successfully.

Will Voluntary Departure Packages (VDPs) be offered?

No VDPs will be offered as part of this process.

Can I get paid more through this process?

You will not receive a change to your substantive VPS level salary as a result of this process.

Will I be reporting to someone new under the new structure?

Some roles will move into different teams and have a slightly different focus, and possibly a new direct line manager, but as per above, substantive classification levels remain the same.

I am part-time. How will I be affected?

Ongoing part-time employment arrangements will not be affected as a direct result of the change in structure. They will however continue to be reviewed periodically in line with [Department's Flexible Working Arrangements Policy](#) and agreed via the Change to Work Arrangements form.

I am a fixed-term employee. What will this mean for me?

You will retain the same terms of employment and your existing fixed term contract will be honoured.

If a fixed term employee is back filling someone, and that person decides to move to a different role in the new structure, do they need to follow that person to the new/changed role? If so, how are the 'same terms of employment' met?

The Business Rules state that "5. Employees on fixed term contracts will be assigned roles in the new organisational structure as part of the process, consistent with the terms of their fixed term contract." While the circumstances of the substantive position holder may change, the terms of the contract for the fixed term employee remain unchanged.

Is there a cut-off for submitting alternative proposals?

We encourage employees to submit proposals in a timely manner but there is currently no deadline set while we are continuing the consultation process. We will communicate with staff well in advance of any deadline being set.

How is the department going to deal with alternative proposals?

The department will consider all alternative proposals at once, so that they can be considered in a holistic way having regard to the relevant branch impacted by proposed change. This will support the department's obligation and commitment to give genuine consideration to all alternative proposals provided by affected staff.

I am on a temporary assignment to a different location. What does that mean for me?

You will remain in your current temporary assignment for its duration. When you complete your assignment you will return to your substantive position in the new structure.

I am currently on higher duties. Will this cease?

Once the change process is complete, current higher duties and other acting arrangements will be reviewed as appropriate by relevant line managers, taking into account the operational needs of the work area.

Will I have to move desks?

If you are part of a newly formed team under the new structure, you may be required to move desks however most people will remain seated where they are currently.

How will the department decide office or desk moves as a result of final structures?

There won't be any accommodation changes before the end of consultation. Once the final structures are settled, formal conversations will start on accommodation needs and how our physical accommodation arrangements may

need to change to better align to the new structures. This work on an accommodation master plan is quite detailed, and includes considerable engagement with all divisions and administrative offices (SCV, FSV, VAHI) via their representative on the Accommodation Governance Group. Any work to bring teams together will be captured in the accommodation master plan, which is essential to ensure a whole of building approach is taken. As much as possible, the accommodation master plan will ensure that the relevant teams are co-located.

I am moving to a new area with a new manager. Will this affect my ability to receive a progression pay outcome for this cycle?

No, as long as you are eligible for progression. At assessment time, your new manager will talk with your former manager to make a recommendation regarding performance and progression.

What's the transition process for people moving to new roles?

We are not at that stage yet. First we need to complete the consultation phase, and once all feedback has been considered and a final structure announced, then we will provide information about how the staff transition process works. Staff transition to any new structure would occur in accordance with staff transition Business Rules. In short, the process works like this:

Where possible, staff are matched to a role that is entirely or substantially replicated in the new structure. If there is no clear match an employee may be assigned to a role in the new structure deemed 'best-fit' to the qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience required, provided it is classified at the same substantive level. Where there is no clear match or the criteria for best-fit cannot be established, an expression of interest (EOI) will be invited from eligible and affected employees classified at the same substantive level. Matching, Best-fit and EOIs are generally be restricted to the relevant work area or functional area of the Division directly affected.

More information

Who can I go to if I have any questions?

If you have questions about the proposed changes, discuss them with your line manager in the first instance but also feel free to email any particular questions to the team at OrganisationalRedesign@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

What supports are available to me?

Staff have access to the department's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides short-term, confidential support at no cost to staff, either by telephone or face-to-face. The EAP may be of assistance to staff involved in a change process. For instance, counsellors may assist with coping strategies and provide emotional support. There's also a dedicated service called ManagerAssist to help managers who want advice and support managing staff through change. The department's EAP provider is Davidson Trahaire Corpsych (DTC) who can be contacted on 1300 360 364. Details are also on the intranet.